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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 7143  
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION Q NORTH KOREAN MISSILE LAUNCHES  
- TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: Most Tuesday morning papers front-paged a decision by the USG and GOJ to postpone the UNSC vote on a resolution against North Korea's missile launches for a few days in light of China's diplomatic effort to push Pyongyang back to the six-party talks.

1. "Diplomacy Alone Cannot Prevent North Korean Missile Launches" Guest columnist Takushoku University Prof. Satoshi Morimoto commented in the conservative Sankei (7/11): "North Korea's missile launches last week pose a serious challenge and threat to the security of the international community, including Japan. Nevertheless, the Japanese people lack an appropriate sense of crisis, and this is indeed a more serious problem. North Korea has devoted the past decade-plus to developing and deploying nuclear weapons and missiles. If the situation is allowed to continue, these two threats will fuse, and Japan will find itself vulnerable to nuclear attack or nuclear blackmail. Japan's efforts in the national security arena have been slow. Although the US Navy currently has an Aegis cruiser equipped with SM-3 missiles at Yokosuka this summer, the deployment of US missiles capable of intercepting Taepodong-2 long-range missiles will not take place for some time. It will not be until the end of the year that the US Army will deploy PAC-3 missiles at Kadena AB, with the GSDF set to deploy PAC-3 missiles starting in 2007 and the MSDF expected to put SM-3 missiles on Aegis ships from 2008.... Although Japan has launched two spy satellites, it is still dependent on the US for analysis of the details of North Korean preparations for missile launches.... It is, therefore, imperative that Japan strengthen its intelligence-gathering activities....

12. "We cannot allow North Korea to conclude that other nations will yield to its saber-rattling policy. We need to deal resolutely with Pyongyang's intimidation. Since North Korea launched the missiles in violation of the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration, Tokyo should inform Pyongyang that the agreement is now void.... Assuming that North Korea launched the missiles in the awareness that it would find itself on the receiving end of considerable pressure from the international community, that means there were forces in the country determined to push forward in doing so. The Taepodong-2 missile that was setn up reportedly failed. Another unsuccessful launch of a Taepodong-2 would damage the prestige of the Kim Jong Il regime, which could lead to a difficult situation. Attention is now shifting to what the response of the international community will be at the UN Security Council and the coming G-8 summit in Russia. The question is whether China and Russia share the world's concern over the missile launches and will vote for the resolution at the UNSC sponsored by Japan and the US. It is imperative that Japan cooperate closely with Washington and deal with any confusion in a cool-headed manner. Although it would be preferable for the North Korean nuclear and missile programs to be abolished through diplomacy, the idea that every security issue can be resolved through talk is fantasy."

SCHIEFFER